

# St Mary's Catholic High School, Leyland

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## END OF SCHOOL YEAR LETTER 2023

July 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the end of this school year, I would like to update you on school developments.

### **School closing and September re-opening**

School finishes for the summer at 12:30pm on Friday, 21 July. We will celebrate Mass from 11:30am with Father Joe at St Mary's parish church, and all pupils will be asked to make their own way home from there. School busses have been arranged to collect from the church. As ever, parents and carers are very welcome to join our end of year celebration.

Staff will be attending school for 2 INSET days on Friday, 1 September and Monday, 4 September, whilst school re-opens for all pupils on Tuesday 5 September, at the usual time of 8:40am. It is so important for pupils in all year groups to get their attendance off to a good start so we will look forward to welcoming everybody on the 5<sup>th</sup>.

### **Pupil Numbers and Changes to Break / Lunches**

Once again, we are delighted to be able to report that the incoming Year 7 are over-subscribed, and we are expecting 170 pupils to join us in the new school year. This means that our school population will be well over 800 in the new academic year.

Whilst we are blessed to have such high numbers wishing to join the school, this does mean we face certain logistical challenges. This half-term, we have trialled moving back to one break and one lunchtime, moving away from the splits which were introduced following COVID-19. This has worked well, with pupils being very responsive to the changes, therefore a single break and lunch will continue into next year. It is hoped that having a single lunchtime will allow for a greater number of activities and clubs to be run during this time. However, lunchtime queues can be lengthy, so to facilitate this, we have invested in the St Mary's 'Food Shack', which has been installed on the main yard. This will allow for a third food-serving area in school, hopefully helping us cope with any extra demand.

### **Royal Avenue and the Local Community**

As we are all aware, Royal Avenue has certain restrictions in terms of width and vehicle capacity. Can I ask that when driving, parents and carers are respectful of each other, local residents and, most importantly, pedestrians. Parking space is extremely limited so please do not use the bus layby to drop-off and pick-up and please consider parking a short walk away from the school grounds to help ease the morning and afternoon congestion.

## Uniform

A reminder of the high expectations we have for all pupils in terms of uniform and appearance. As you would expect, these expectations will be in force from the first day of the autumn term. This includes, amongst other things, no make-up / false tan, no extreme haircuts, no jewellery, black shoes (no trainers) and blazers. Jumpers will only be required from October half-term. Parental support in this is very much appreciated.

## Staffing Information

As we approach the summer holidays, it is appropriate to pay thanks to those staff who are leaving us for pastures new, as well as informing you of forthcoming changes.


This term we say goodbye to a number of staff. From our Business Support team, we say thank you and farewell to Mrs Watkinson our Assistant Business Manager, and Mrs Hurst, the school's Exam Officer. From the teaching team, we bid farewell to Miss O'Bryan (English/Expressive Arts), Ms Fortune (Music) and Miss Bevins (English). These colleagues leave with our best wishes for the future. In addition, our SENDCO, Mrs Schofield is departing for pastures new, whilst Mrs Ward (Curriculum Leader, MFL) is retiring from the teaching profession. Similarly, Mrs Gallimore, our very experienced Teaching Assistant, is also embarking on retired life! On behalf of all pupils and staff, past and present, I'd like to thank all our departing staff for all for their service to the school, and wish them well with their future away from St Mary's.

You will be aware from my Easter letter that Mrs Webb and Mr Weaver are taking on the role of Assistant Headteacher in September – Mrs Webb will oversee Teaching & Learning, and Mr Weaver Personal Development. Therefore, the positions of Curriculum Leader have been filled with the external appointment of Miss Wade (English) and the internal promotion of Mrs Blundell (Humanities). The Assistant Business Manager role has been filled by Mrs Ruth, with Mr Shone taking up the Exams Officer position.

Internal appointments have also been made with Mrs Drew stepping up to replace Mrs Ward as Curriculum Leader for MFL, and Mrs Taylor being appointed to 2<sup>nd</sup> in Humanities and Miss Wilson to 2<sup>nd</sup> in Religious Studies. Joining St Mary's for September we have Ms Lupton (English and Drama), Mr Haslam (Science maternity cover), Miss Joyce (Geography), Miss Ellison (Religious Studies) and Mrs Petit-Price (MFL). Part-time appointments have been made with Miss Collins (Music), Mrs Haj-Manouchehri (Art) and Mrs Gill (Technology). Lastly, Miss Tumelty will join St Mary's in the capacity of SENDCO. All new additions to the team are most welcome and come to us with a variety of experiences and at different stages in their career.

Finally, may I pay special tribute to your encouragement for all we do here at St Mary's. Teaching is a challenging profession, but with the backing of parents and carers it can become more straightforward. Your support is never underestimated or taken for granted. We look forward to another year of working in unison for the benefit of your children but, before September arrives, I would like to wish an enjoyable and restful summer for you and your family.

Yours sincerely,



Mr P Thompson

Headteacher